

MARYLAND DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH/BEHAVIORAL HEALTH
ADMINISTRATION (MDH/BHA)

PRE-PROPOSAL CONFERENCE

RFP NUMBER 20-18369

FAMILY PEER SUPPORT AND NAVIGATION SERVICES

Held at: Spring Grove Hospital Center
55 Wade Avenue
Dix Building
Catonsville, Maryland 21228

October 16, 2019

10:00 a.m.

ATTENDANCE:

AGENCY:

Afua Tisdale, Contract Officer, OPASS

Laura Burns-Heffner, BHA

Siji Georgekutty, Director of Procurement, BHA

Janelle Robinson, Director, Minority Business
Department, MDH

Mary Viggiani, BHA

ATTENDEES:

Jane Plapinger, Maryland Coalition of Families
Ann Geddes, Maryland Coalition of Families
Timothy Harrison, Charm City Community Development
Corporation
Judy Grusso, NAMI Maryland
Aaron Jenkins, Behavioral Health Administration
Lisa Firnberg, Maryland Coalition of Families
Lisa Lowe, FACE Addition
Marion Kathsererez, Behavioral Health Administration
Tom Merrick, Behavioral Health Administration

(Appearing Telephonically):

Kathleen Rebbert-Franklin, BHA

Reported by: Carol O'Brocki, Notary Public
Hunt Reporting Company, Glen Burnie, Maryland

1 P R O C E E D I N G S

2 (10:20 a.m.)

3 MS. TISDALE: Good morning. My name is Afua
4 Tisdale. I'm the Contract Officer for this
5 procurement, Family Care Support and Navigation
6 Services. We're going to go around with introductions
7 and then we're going to -- those who are on the phone,
8 you can introduce yourselves at that point once we
9 finish here. Starting with our left.

10 MS. ROBINSON: Janelle Robinson, the
11 Department of Health, the MBE Director.

12 MS. GEORGEKUTTY: Siji Georgekutty, Director
13 of Procurement.

14 MS. LOWE: Lisa Lowe, Family Advocates
15 Coalition to End Addiction in Maryland -- FACE
16 Addiction in Maryland.

17 MR. MERRICK: I'm Tom Merrick. I work for
18 BHA.

19 MR. JENKINS: Aaron Jenkins, BHA,
20 Procurement.

21 MR. HARRISON: Timothy Harrison, Charm City

1 Community Development Corporation.

2 MS. FIRNBERG: Lisa Firnberg, Maryland
3 Coalition of Families.

4 MS. GEDDES: Ann Geddes, Maryland Coalition
5 of Families.

6 MS. PLAPINGER: Jane Plapinger, Maryland
7 Coalition of Families.

8 MS. GRUSSO: Judy Grusso, NAMI Maryland.

9 MS. KATHSERELEZ: Marion Kathserelez, BHA.

10 MS. VIGGIANI: Mary Viggiani, BHA.

11 MS. BURNS-HEFFNER: Laura Burns-Heffner, BHA.

12 MS. TISDALE: Those on the phone can
13 introduce yourself at this time.

14 MS. REBBERT-FRANKLIN: Hi. This is Kathy
15 Rebbert-Franklin, BHA.

16 MS. TISDALE: Anyone else?

17 (No response.)

18 MS. TISDALE: Okay. Everyone has signed in?
19 If you have business cards, I ask that you leave your
20 business cards just in case there is a need to contact
21 you we will be able to do so.

1 Again, my name is Afua Tisdale. I'm from the
2 Office of Procurement and Support Services. I'm here
3 to help you understand the process for this
4 procurement.

5 If further clarification is needed for this
6 meeting, I can be reached by email at
7 mdh.solicitationquestions@maryland.gov. I also can be
8 reached through eMMA.

9 This meeting is to review the Request for
10 Proposal for Provisions of Family Peer Support and
11 Navigation Services for the State of Maryland. The
12 Department intends to make a single award based on this
13 RFP.

14 As you know, the contract resulting from this
15 solicitation will be for a three-year base period with
16 two one-year renewal options.

17 The MBE subcontracting goal is two percent
18 for this procurement and the VSBE subcontracting goal
19 is two percent, as well. There are no minimum
20 qualifications for this procurement.

21 Carefully review Section 2, Contract

1 Requirements, Scope of Work. As noted, Maryland
2 Department of Health has issued this in order to
3 implement and provide a statewide system of family
4 support and navigation services to families with
5 children, adolescents, young adults, and loved ones
6 with a mental health, substance abuse problem,
7 gambling, or co-occurring disorder.

8 All subsequent documentation regarding this
9 solicitation will be posted on eMaryland Marketplace
10 Advantage, which is eMMA's website, and Maryland
11 Department of Health website.

12 Please remember that in order to receive a
13 contract award a vendor must be registered on eMMA.
14 Registration is free.

15 I would like to stress to everyone today that
16 any questions asked during the question and answer
17 portion of this meeting be submitted to the Department
18 in writing for clarity purposes, and you can submit
19 that to mdh.solicitationquestions, or through eMMA.

20 Carefully review Subsection 4.3, Questions,
21 regarding how to submit questions to this Pre-Proposal

1 Conference. Questions, if you send them to
2 mdh.solicitationquestions shall be directed to Dana
3 Dembrow, no later than ten days prior to the proposal
4 due date.

5 Again, the contract resulting from this
6 solicitation will be in effect for a three-year base
7 period with two one-year option periods beginning on or
8 about July 1st, 2020.

9 Carefully review the clause shown in
10 Subsection 4.23, Payments by Electronic Funds Transfer.
11 By submitting a response to this solicitation, the
12 offeror agrees to accept payments by electronic funds
13 transfer, unless the State Comptroller's Office grants
14 an exemption.

15 Payment by electronic funds transfer is
16 mandatory for contracts exceeding \$200,000. This
17 section goes into detail on how to register or request
18 an exemption, and that's Section 4.23.

19 The procurement method used for this
20 solicitation is competitive sealed proposals. There
21 are several steps involved in this method, so your

1 attention to this solicitation document is crucial to
2 the successful submission of your proposal.

3 The contract requirement Scope of Work is
4 listed in Section 2. It gives an outline of
5 responsibilities of the contract and give you a clear
6 understanding of what the Department expects of the
7 successful offeror in the provision of these services.
8 And someone will go over the specifications -- scope of
9 work later.

10 Proposal format, offerors are required to
11 submit their response to the RFP in two parts. Section
12 5, Proposal Format, lists all submission requirements.

13 Volume I, Technical Proposal, and Volume II,
14 Financial Proposal, shall be sealed separately from one
15 another. So, the financial proposal shall be sealed.
16 I should not open up a box and see any pricing. It
17 should be sealed separately from your proposal. It can
18 go in the same box but keep it sealed.

19 Offerors shall provide their proposals in two
20 separately sealed labeled packages. Volume I,
21 Technical Proposal, consisting of one original

1 technical proposal and all supporting material, four
2 duplicate copies; electronic version of the technical
3 proposal in Microsoft Word format, Version 2007 or
4 greater; a technical proposal in searchable Adobe PDF
5 format, and a second searchable Adobe copy of the
6 technical proposal will be confidential and propriety
7 information.

8 Volume II, Financial Proposal, consisting of
9 one original executed financial proposal and all
10 supporting material marked and sealed; four duplicate
11 copies of above separately marked and sealed; an
12 electronic version of the financial proposal in
13 searchable Adobe PDF format; and a searchable Adobe PDF
14 copy of the financial proposal with confidential and
15 propriety information redacted.

16 Please make sure you label the outside of the
17 packaging with the OPASS number, my name as the
18 contract officer, and the title of the procurement,
19 which is Family Peer Support and Navigation Services.
20 Label each electronic media on the outside with the RFP
21 title and number, and name of the offeror.

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1 The evaluation committee, evaluation
2 criteria, and selection procedures are outlined in
3 Section 6. Your proposals will be evaluated by a
4 committee organized for that purpose and will be based
5 on the criteria set forth in the RFP. The technical
6 criteria listed in descending order of importance can
7 be found in Subsection 6.2, with the financial proposal
8 criteria listed in Subsection 6.3.

9 The selection procedures is highlighted in
10 Subsection 6.5. As noted, the contract will be awarded
11 to the responsible offeror that submitted the proposal
12 determined to be the most advantageous to the State
13 considering technical evaluation factors and price
14 factors set forth in the RFP.

15 Other than composing your technical and
16 financial proposal, the most important matter is to
17 have your proposal submitted by the date, time, and
18 location listed. Your proposals are due no later than
19 November 19, 2019 at 2:00 p.m. at the address listed on
20 the Key Information Summary Sheet -- which is 201 West
21 Preston Street in Baltimore, 21201.

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1 Give plenty of time for lateness or anything
2 because we cannot accept it in our office no later than
3 2:00. If it comes in at 2:01 it will be rejected. So
4 it's vital that you get it in on time, and there is
5 security that you have to check into, and you have to
6 find parking. So, consider all of those factors.

7 The three acceptable means of delivering your
8 proposal are the U.S. Postal Service, hand delivery by
9 the offeror, and you want to request a receipt, and
10 hand delivery by a commercial carrier. Again, you want
11 to make sure you have a receipt.

12 Please remember that after this Pre-Proposal
13 Conference, prospective offerors may have questions and
14 answers that may help them understand the RFP. Please
15 keep in mind that the answer to your questions, if they
16 are significant in nature, shall be posted on eMMA and
17 MDH websites. Therefore, please allow sufficient time
18 for this to occur.

19 If you have any comments or questions about
20 the procurement process, again I can be reached by
21 mdh.solicitationquestions@maryland.gov or through eMMA.

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1 Are there any questions about the procurement
2 process?

3 MS. PLAPINGER: I have a question.

4 MS. TISDALE: Yes?

5 MS. PLAPINGER: Do you have a projected
6 notification date in mind? Award notification date for
7 award?

8 MS. TISDALE: It's probably -- it takes about
9 -- it could take about three to four months for award
10 after receiving proposals. It could be sooner than
11 that, but that's just -- I think about two to three
12 months, I would say for award, and it could extend
13 beyond that, depending, but it's about that time.
14 Okay?

15 MS. PLAPINGER: Okay. Thank you.

16 MS. TISDALE: I'm sorry. Can you state your
17 name and where you're from when asking questions for
18 the record?

19 MS. PLAPINGER: Jane Plapinger, Maryland
20 Coalition of Families.

21 MS. TISDALE: Okay.

1 MS. FIRNBERG: And I'm Lisa Firnberg, also
2 from Maryland Coalition of Families. I just wanted to
3 clarify, the Procurement Officer listed in the
4 paperwork is Dana Dembrow?

5 MS. TISDALE: Yes.

6 MS. FIRNBERG: I just wanted to make sure I
7 had your name down correctly, and to clarify again, if
8 questions should be addressed to you or to Dana, and in
9 the final submission to you to or Dana.

10 MS. TISDALE: Well, any questions that come
11 to mdh.solicitationquestions can be addressed to Dana -
12 - Dana or I. I have access to that email, but he also
13 has access, or any questions if you send them through
14 eMMA it will come straight to me.

15 MS. GRUSSO: And what's your name again?

16 MS. TISDALE: Afua Tisdale. A-F-U-A T-I-S-
17 D-A-L-E. Just be sure to get those questions in to us
18 as soon as possible so that we'll have time to answer
19 them.

20 MS. FIRNBERG: And the final submission
21 should be addressed to Dana?

1 MS. TISDALE: It should be addressed to
2 myself.

3 MS. FIRNBERG: To you?

4 MS. TISDALE: Yes.

5 MS. FIRNBERG: Okay. Thank you.

6 MS. TISDALE: And it's not to be submitted
7 through eMaryland Marketplace Advantage.

8 MS. FIRNBERG: Right.

9 MS. TISDALE: Okay. All right. Janelle?

10 MS. ROBINSON: Good morning. Janelle
11 Robinson, MBE Director for the Department of Health.

12 The Maryland Department of Transportation
13 Certified MBE Utilization and Fair Solicitation
14 Affidavit, which is Attachment D1, must be fully and
15 accurately completed and submitted in Tab O of your bid
16 or technical proposal. Failure to do so will result in
17 your bid or proposal being deemed non-responsive.

18 On the D1 form you must first acknowledge and
19 express your intention to meet the overall MBE goal
20 percentage established for this solicitation.

21 As no subgoals have been established for this

1 solicitation, do not enter any information regarding
2 the percentages for African American, Hispanic
3 American, Asian American, or Women-Owned Businesses in
4 Section 1.

5 The MBE Participation Schedule should include
6 the names of the minority business enterprises that you
7 intend to use to meet the required MBE goal, along with
8 their Federal employment identification number, their
9 MDOT MBE certification number, as well as their
10 certification category.

11 Only MDOT MBE certification is acceptable.
12 MBE certification from another entity or jurisdiction
13 will not be accepted.

14 Additionally, the percentage of the total
15 contract value to be provided by the particular MBE
16 should be entered, as well as a specific description of
17 work that is to be performed by that particular MBE.
18 MBEs must be fully and completely certified at the time
19 of submission of your bid or proposal.

20 MBE prime contractors may count 50 percent
21 towards the established subcontracting goal. In the

1 summary you will break down the specific MBE status of
2 the particular MBE subcontractors, and this should be
3 equal to or exceed the MBE goal established for this
4 solicitation.

5 Within ten working days of receiving notice
6 that your firm is the apparent awardee, you must submit
7 your Outreach Efforts Compliance Statement which is
8 Attachment D2, and your Subcontractor Project
9 Participation Certification, Attachment D3.

10 You may request a waiver of the MBE goal, and
11 within ten working days of receiving notice that your
12 firm is the apparent awardee, you must submit all
13 required waiver documentation in accordance with COMAR
14 21.11.03.10.

15 Please carefully review the liquidated
16 damages provision in this solicitation regarding
17 compliance with the MBE rules and regulations.

18 The VSBE Utilization Affidavit and
19 Subcontractor Participation Schedule, which is
20 Attachment E1, must be fully and accurately completed
21 and submitted in Tab O of your bid or technical

1 proposal. Failure to do so may result in your bid or
2 proposal being deemed non-responsive.

3 On the E1 form, you must first acknowledge
4 and express your intention to meet the overall VSBE
5 goal percentage established for this solicitation. The
6 VSBE Subcontractor Project Participation Schedule
7 should include the names of the Veteran-Owned Business
8 Enterprises that you intend to use to meet the required
9 VSBE goal, along with their DUNS number.

10 Only United States Department of Veterans
11 Affairs certification is acceptable. VSBE
12 certification from another entity or jurisdiction will
13 not be accepted.

14 Additionally, the percentage of the total
15 contract value to be provided by the particular VSBE
16 should be entered, as well as a specific description of
17 work that is to be performed by that particular VSBE.

18 Within ten working days of receiving notice
19 that your firm is the apparent awardee, you must submit
20 your Subcontractor Project Participation Statement,
21 which is Attachment E2. You may request a waiver of

1 the VSBE goal, and within ten working days of receiving
2 notice that your firm is the apparent awardee, you must
3 submit all required waiver documentation in accordance
4 with COMAR 21.11.13.07.

5 In this summary you'll enter the total VSBE
6 participation and this should be equal to or exceed the
7 VSBE goal established for this solicitation.

8 Are there any questions for me?

9 MS. PLAPINGER: Can you just cite the COMAR
10 regs that describe for the -- what you mentioned for
11 the MBE?

12 MS. ROBINSON: Sure. MBE is COMAR
13 21.11.03.10, and that's referencing the waiver request.
14 Would you like the VSBE?

15 Ms. PLAPINGER: Yeah.

16 MS. ROBINSON: Okay. For VSBE it's COMAR
17 21.11.13.07, and that's waiver documentation for the
18 VSBE goal.

19 Any other questions? No?

20 MS. TISDALE: I want to ask a question. Afua
21 Tisdale, Office of Procurement and Support Services.

1 Has everyone filled out -- is there anyone that has not
2 completed the MBE D1A form? So everyone has filled --

3 MS. GRUSSO: I don't know if I have or not.
4 I haven't.

5 MS. TISDALE: Okay. So I stress to you to
6 please give me a call. You might not think you have
7 any questions, but I will go over with you to make sure
8 that it is accurately completed.

9 Because if it's not accurately completed, we
10 will not even review your proposals, and I can't tell
11 you how many times we had to reject proposals because
12 it was not complete.

13 The form seems complicated. So, some people
14 missed the mark just by a little bitty -- and it
15 happens a lot. I just had to throw out two proposals,
16 and that's a waste of time and money getting that stuff
17 together.

18 MS. ROBINSON: For everybody.

19 MS. TISDALE: Yeah.

20 MS. ROBINSON: Not just for the companies,
21 but for us, as well, to go through it and take your

1 time and your effort, and our time and effort to look
2 at that. And that's the first thing that we look at is
3 those MBE and the VSBE paperwork.

4 I'm given that paperwork to review, and then
5 once that paperwork is okayed, then your technical
6 proposal will be reviewed, then your financial proposal
7 will be reviewed.

8 So, if that form isn't correct, we won't even
9 look at the rest and it makes me a little sad, to be
10 honest, to see all the paper that you put into it, all
11 the effort that you clearly put into the proposal and
12 we don't even get to look at it.

13 MS. GRUSSO: What was the name of this
14 document? I'm sorry.

15 MS. ROBINSON: It's Attachment D1. It's the
16 Certified MBE Utilization and Fair Solicitation
17 Affidavit.

18 MS. FIRNBERG: And E1?

19 MS. ROBINSON: And E1 for the VSBE. Yep.

20 MS. FIRNBERG: And if we will ultimately be
21 seeking a waiver potentially, we still fill out these

1 forms initially, not the waiver forms; is that correct?

2 MS. ROBINSON: Yes. That's correct. Just
3 start with those forms. There's a box to check if
4 you're going to meet the goal, and then there's another
5 box to check if you're requesting a waiver. You don't
6 have to worry about the waiver documentation until your
7 firm is the apparent awardee.

8 MS. FIRNBERG: Okay. Thank you.

9 MS. TISDALE: Any waiver documentation that
10 you submit, if you're the awardee, has to be predated
11 before the proposal showing that all of your effort was
12 done before the proposals were due. So, we want to
13 make sure that you're giving a good faith effort, not
14 just checking you want a waiver.

15 We want to see the work that you've done
16 prior to the proposals are due, and that's very
17 important because we can award you and if we don't see
18 that you've done any work to try to obtain MBEs or got
19 signatures from MBEs stating that you tried to obtain
20 them and it didn't work out, then we can't award you
21 the contract. So, please just read it carefully.

1 MS. ROBINSON: And I just want to add on to
2 that. In terms of the Good Faith Effort, negotiation
3 is really important. If a company provides you a price
4 and it's either too high for what you want to pay or it
5 is out of your budget, you need to negotiate with the
6 companies. Just telling a company, "no, that's too
7 much" is not considered a good faith effort.

8 We've had companies that have done that in
9 the past. We've had to go to the Board of Contract
10 Appeals. It got messy, but we won eventually, because
11 that person didn't make any effort. The vendor -- the
12 MBE subcontractor said "I want \$1,700 per deliverable,"
13 whatever it was, and the vendor -- the prime vendor
14 said "no, that's too high; thank you for your
15 interest."

16 And the Department did not consider that a
17 good faith effort because there was no effort to
18 negotiate with the vendor. There was no effort to
19 suggest any kind of different work. There was nothing
20 there. It was just a no thank you.

21 MS. TISDALE: Go ahead. Can you state your

1 name and introduce yourself?

2 MR. HARRISON: Tim Harrison with Charm City
3 Community Development Corporation. The question is,
4 you know, I'm seeking out the MBE or the VSBE. Is
5 there a product or service that we're limited to, or
6 can we use any type of --

7 MS. ROBINSON: No, we leave that open to the
8 vendors. Be as creative as you'd like. Some people
9 use MBEs for simply office supplies or call center or
10 printing or things like that. But if you can figure
11 out another way to use them, have at it, so long as the
12 goal is met.

13 MR. HARRISON: All right.

14 MS. ROBINSON: Any other questions for me?

15 (No response.)

16 MS. ROBINSON: All right. Thank you.

17 MS. TISDALE: Next you'll hear from Laura
18 Burns.

19 MS. BURNS-HEFFNER: Hi. Good morning. As
20 you may know, BHA, just as an overview we currently
21 fund programs for family peer support and navigation

1 services for families with children and adolescents
2 with mental health disorders, and for families with
3 young adults or loved ones with substance use, problem
4 gambling, and co-occurring disorders.

5 We also fund a Good Samaritan Ambassador
6 Project, using peer support, family peer support
7 navigation specialists who also serve as Good Sam
8 ambassadors that educate the public about the Good
9 Samaritan law using pre-approved print and verbal
10 messaging. They do that through in-person meetings,
11 forums, town halls, discussions, et cetera.

12 BHA is currently looking to implement and
13 provide a statewide system of family peer support and
14 navigation services to families with children,
15 adolescents, young adults, and loved ones with a mental
16 health, substance use problem, gambling, and/or co-
17 occurring disorder, and we would also like to
18 consolidate the Good Sam Ambassador Project using the
19 trained family peer support and navigation specialists
20 within the statewide program.

21 We're interested in consolidating any prior

1 family peer support and navigation services programs
2 along with the Good Sam Ambassador Program into one
3 statewide system of services.

4 MS. TISDALE: Any questions for Laura?

5 (No response.)

6 MS. TISDALE: None? Okay. If you come up
7 with any questions, again -- okay. State your name and
8 where you're from?

9 MS. PLAPINGER: I'm not sure if this question
10 belongs here. Jane Plapinger, Maryland Coalition of
11 Families. Regarding the Good Samaritan Program, the
12 language in the RFP wasn't clear to me in terms of
13 whether the offeror is expected to include in the
14 budget the materials, or whether it will be in
15 collaboration and whether the money -- some of the
16 money will come from BHA, and this is Section 2.3.2.2,
17 and it's Subsection E and G.

18 It says "Collaborate with BHA within 20 days
19 of award and throughout campaign to create, print, and
20 circulate any other needed resource materials." And
21 then G says maintain responsibility for printing and

1 distributing all materials.

2 So I just wanted to clarify that the offeror
3 should put in the budget the full projected cost of
4 those materials.

5 MS. BURNS-HEFFNER: Yes.

6 MS. PLAPINGER: Thank you.

7 MS. TISDALE: Any additional questions?

8 MS. PLAPINGER: I had another question.

9 MS. TISDALE: Yes?

10 MS. PLAPINGER: About travel. There's a
11 statement that indicates that travel will not be
12 reimbursed under the RFP. The RFP also includes face-
13 to-face provision of services in the scope. So, I
14 wondered what kind of travel is permitted in the budget
15 and what kind of travel is not?

16 MS. TISDALE: So, it is included. Overall
17 pricing, when you're doing your pricing. I wanted to
18 take a look at the --

19 MS. BURNS-HEFFNER: Travel costs are expected
20 to be folded into the overall price of the contract and
21 not specified separately outside of your overall costs.

1 So, they're not reimbursed separately. They're
2 expected to be folded into the cost of doing business.

3 And it's not -- the budget requirements that
4 were specified do not have a line item for travel in
5 them. I don't have that right in front of me. Do you,
6 Siji, the Excel spreadsheet what's required to be
7 submitted as far as the pricing?

8 MS. FIRNBERG: From what we've seen the
9 financial proposal is a very simple, very high level.
10 It is just (indiscernible) cost of year one, Good
11 Samaritan, and gambling navigation, cost of year one,
12 Good Sam, cost of year one, and so forth for each year.
13 It really has no sub lines. We just wanted to clarify
14 that that is, in fact, the intent of --

15 MS. BURNS-HEFFNER: Yes.

16 MS. FIRNBERG: It's just that top line
17 number? You're not expecting any more detailed
18 breakdown per line item?

19 MS. TISDALE: No. No.

20 MS. BURNS-HEFFNER: So, to be clear, any
21 travel expenses that you intend to incur through the

1 cost of this contract would be incorporated in that
2 price.

3 MS. PLAPINGER: So there is no supporting
4 material required with that? There's just that one
5 spreadsheet to show the price per year for program?

6 MS. BURNS-HEFFNER: Yes. Yes.

7 MS. PLAPINGER: Thank you.

8 MS. GRUSSO: There's no budget justification?

9 MS. TISDALE: No. There is no budget
10 justification. Any additional questions?

11 MS. FIRNBERG: I just have some questions
12 about the proposal -- the logistics of --

13 MS. TISDALE: State your name.

14 MS. FIRNBERG: I'm Lisa from the Maryland
15 Coalition of Families.

16 The submission says that a second searchable
17 Adobe PDF -- a searchable version is required with any
18 confidential and proprietary information redacted. If
19 we don't have any confidential propriety information
20 that requires redaction, do we need a second copy of
21 the PDF or does that second copy become --

1 MS. TISDALE: That first one is fine if you
2 don't want to submit a redacted copy.

3 MS. FIRNBERG: Another question.

4 MS. TISDALE: Uh-huh.

5 MS. FIRNBERG: It says say that the
6 electronic version, we need to submit a Microsoft Word
7 format version and am I correct as I understand then
8 that that would be sort of the format (phonetic) of
9 response to any paperwork that was originally submitted
10 as a PDF, like things we have to fill out and sign and
11 things, is not needed to be part of --

12 MS. TISDALE: No, no, no. No documents are
13 attached except for the attachment that you will submit
14 under -- I believe it's Tab O. You don't have to
15 include that.

16 MS. FIRNBERG: So just the -- kind of the
17 crux of --

18 MS. TISDALE: Just the questions.

19 MS. FIRNBERG: -- our response is in Word?

20 MS. TISDALE: Yes.

21 MS. FIRNBERG: Thank you.

1 MR. HARRISON: Tim Harrison with Charm City
2 once again. Based off of Section 2.3.1.10 is the 1,500
3 families statewide? Is that how many we're going to
4 come in contact with, 1,500 statewide?

5 MS. BURNS-HEFFNER: Yes, sir.

6 MR. HARRISON: Is that a minimum?

7 MS. BURNS-HEFFNER: Yes. Well -- no. I
8 believe it says approximate. Let me find -- could you
9 tell me again where you are?

10 MR. HARRISON: 2.3.1.10.

11 MS. GEORGEKUTTY: Page 5.

12 MS. BURNS-HEFFNER: It says approximately
13 1,500 families statewide in year one, with an increase
14 to approximately 2,000. And those are approximations.

15 MR. HARRISON: We're going to do that in
16 Baltimore by ourself?

17 MS. BURNS-HEFFNER: It's intended to be a
18 statewide program.

19 MR. HARRISON: Right. Right. No, I
20 understand that. That's why I was amazed by that
21 number.

1 MS. GEDDES: So I have a question. So, in
2 Section 5.3 --

3 MS. TISDALE: Can you state your name?

4 MS. GEDDES: Oh, I'm sorry. Ann Geddes with
5 the Maryland Coalition of Families. In Section
6 5.3.2.F.13, there are five specific requirements, and
7 I'm looking first of all at B and C.

8 The language in B and C -- the language in B
9 is almost identical to 2.3.1.17, and the language in C
10 is almost identical to 2.3.1.19, and the question is do
11 you want us to reference those previous -- the
12 responses in those previous two sections of Section 2,
13 or do you want the answer repeated?

14 MS. TISDALE: Okay. I'm sorry. What's the
15 first section number in Section 5?

16 MS. GEDDES: So, the first section number is
17 5.3.2.F.13, and under that bullet there are five
18 specific requirements.

19 MS. TISDALE: Okay.

20 MS. GEDDES: The first one, B, that language
21 is almost identical to the language in 2.3.1.17.

1 MS. TISDALE: I'm looking for 2.3.1. Is it
2 redundant or --

3 MS. GEDDES: That's what I'm wondering.

4 MS. TISDALE: Is it a redundancy or --

5 MS. KATHSERELEZ: But then if you've got to
6 find it --

7 MS. GEDDES: So you just want us to --

8 MS. KATHSERELEZ: I think you should just put
9 it in.

10 MS. GEDDES: Just put it in?

11 MS. KATHSERELEZ: Yeah, just so you know that
12 you've answered it, and then who's ever doing it, it
13 has it in each section that's required.

14 MS. GEDDES: Okay. Thank you. And then my
15 other question had to do with that section, as well,
16 5.3.2.F.13. Question D asks for a family peer support
17 and navigation experience and plan.

18 It certainly makes sense that you would be
19 asking for the experience with -- if you're supplying
20 navigation services, but the plan to deliver family
21 peer support and navigation experiences is essentially

1 the content in Section 2. All the content in Section 2
2 is our plan on how we're going to deliver family peer
3 support and navigation services.

4 So I'm wondering what you were looking for
5 there. The plan in Section 2 -- so it's a two-part
6 question -- what's our experience and what's our plan.
7 The experience question is very clear. What's our plan
8 is essentially the content in Section 2 as you have
9 laid it out in 2.1 to 2.19.

10 MS. TISDALE: So, if you have anything
11 additional to add to the plan as to how --

12 MS. GEDDES: Okay.

13 MS. TISDALE: You can include that in your
14 proposal. I think that's what we're looking for as to
15 the how.

16 MS. GEDDES: Additional information about
17 how? Okay.

18 MS. TISDALE: Yes. So, any additional
19 information can boost your proposal rating.

20 MS. GEDDES: Thank you. Well, the next part
21 is a similar thing for the Good Samaritan Program. It

1 asks for a Good Samaritan experience and plan, and
2 again we understand why you want to list experience,
3 but the plan is duplicate with Section 2 content. So I
4 assume that you're asking for the same thing? That's
5 the how?

6 MS. TISDALE: Yes. Yes.

7 MS. GEDDES: Okay. My other question was in
8 5.3.2.F.12, it asks for the offeror to describe the
9 organization's philosophical and practical approach.
10 But then in Section 5.3.2.F.3, the RFP asks, you know,
11 for us to include specific methodology and techniques,
12 and we were wondering what was the distinction between
13 practical approach and techniques? What distinction
14 were you making? Specific methodology and techniques
15 is asked for in 5.3.2.F.3.

16 MS. BURNS-HEFFNER: So, 5.3 --

17 MS. GEDDES: 2.F.3, page 41.

18 MS. BURNS-HEFFNER: Thank you. On page 41,
19 which one is it again? I'm sorry.

20 MS. GEDDES: 3.

21 MS. BURNS-HEFFNER: Okay.

1 MS. PLAPINGER: It's the third line where it
2 says the work plan shall include specific methodology
3 techniques.

4 MS. BURNS-HEFFNER: So, you're wondering is
5 techniques and practical approaches the same or --

6 MS. GEDDES: Or are you looking for something
7 different?

8 MS. BURNS-HEFFNER: I don't personally know
9 what the difference is between those two. I don't know
10 if there was an intention to have a difference.

11 MS. TISDALE: It seems like 12 is more
12 detailed to me.

13 MS. GEDDES: Then 12 is more detailed than
14 F.1.3?

15 MS. TISDALE: Yes.

16 MS. GEDDES: Okay. So, you're looking for a
17 more detailed answer there.

18 MS. TISDALE: So, that includes the training.
19 I guess it lays out more detail on 12.

20 MS. GEDDES: All right. Thank you.

21 MS. BURNS-HEFFNER: All right. So, actually

1 I'm going to make a correction on that. In 12 when
2 you're talking about the organization's philosophical
3 and practical approach, that is more of a general type
4 of -- you know, this is how we do it, why we do -- in
5 general, what we do, in my way of thinking.

6 For the other one, F.3, we are asking for a
7 work plan, and so I think that would be the more
8 specific methodology, techniques, how you are
9 specifically going to do that, number of staff, part of
10 goods and services. Yeah. So I would respectfully
11 want to make that change.

12 MS. GEDDES: All right. I understand. Thank
13 you.

14 MS. TISDALE: Yes?

15 MS. FIRNBERG: I've got a question about the
16 signature process. In Section 5.3.2.F.1, at the
17 beginning of the major instructions of the submission,
18 the last sentence reads "the response shall address
19 each requirement in Sections 2 and 3 in order, and
20 shall contain a cross reference to the requirement."

21 So, in looking through Sections 2 and 3,

1 there are numbers such as Sections 2.1 and 2.2. They
2 describe the general summary and background of why BHA
3 is seeking this procurement. Can you clarify what if
4 any response to that is required as part of our --

5 MS. TISDALE: We're looking for responses to
6 the contract requirements.

7 MS. FIRNBERG: Okay. So there are a number
8 of sections, like 2.1, 2.2, 2.4, and then a number of
9 subsections of Section 3. They don't really elicit the
10 need for a response. They're sort of just stating this
11 is -- these are like general requirements, without
12 really seeking approval for it.

13 MS. TISDALE: Okay.

14 MS. FIRNBERG: It's unclear. So, can you
15 clarify what our response needs to be pertaining to
16 those specific subsections?

17 MS. GRUSSO: So, do you just want like
18 confirmation that --

19 MS. TISDALE: So we're looking for what you
20 guys are going to offer for the contract requirements.
21 Again, that's dealing with the how, presenting -- you

1 can maybe address some with --

2 MS. FIRNBERG: Wait. For instance, like
3 Section 2.1 is the summary statement. It's stating
4 largely what Laura actually shared a little bit before
5 of why BHA is looking to consolidate. 2.3 and all the
6 subsections are really the crux of all of our other
7 requirements that we absolutely understand that we need
8 to respond to.

9 We're just looking for some clarification on
10 how we might respond to Sections 2.2 and 2.1 if
11 necessary.

12 MS. BURNS-HEFFNER: So, essentially you're
13 asking that since Section 2 describes a summary and
14 background of why BHA is seeking a procurement, please
15 clarify what is expected in response to these
16 requirements?

17 MS. FIRNBERG: Exactly.

18 MS. BURNS-HEFFNER: And I believe we would
19 say nothing specific is required.

20 MS. FIRNBERG: Okay. Could you clarify if
21 the same is true for Section 2.4, which is -- it

1 indicates the expectation of the monthly progress
2 report. And 2.4 and all of its subsections.

3 MS. TISDALE: Well, this is for the
4 deliverables. What would be required is that you agree
5 to the deliverables, that you're accepting the
6 deliverables, basically.

7 What we're looking for mainly is a section-
8 by-section like of the how you would perform these
9 services, and we're looking for -- as far as Section
10 2.4, will you be able to meet the deliverables.

11 MS. GRUSSO: So, it's an affirmation of --

12 MS. TISDALE: Yes.

13 MS. BURNS-HEFFNER: So, some areas need to be
14 specifically addressed with how the vendor plans to
15 perform the services required. Other areas may be
16 addressed with the offeror stating agreement or
17 disagreement.

18 So you would determine which areas you may
19 need to explain more, and which areas you agree or
20 disagree with whatever the required deliverable is.

21 MS. FIRNBERG: There are a few -- in Section

1 3 -- I'm sorry. On page 14, Section 3.6, this is --
2 again we're looking for -- we know that we have to
3 submit our insurance. So it's essentially
4 (indiscernible) insurance requirements that we would
5 submit under Tab K, our current insurance.

6 But again, as part of the narrative, would
7 you be looking for just a statement of affirmation,
8 yes, we will --

9 MS. TISDALE: For now, when you submit your
10 proposal you would submit -- the insurance requirements
11 show that you do have the insurance. We want to see a
12 certificate of your insurance. Once you are awarded
13 the contract we will ask that you submit another
14 certificate of insurance showing MDH as your
15 certificate holder.

16 MS. FIRNBERG: So, I think there are --
17 because there are a number of areas in Section 3 that
18 are -- the instructions indicate to put those sections
19 in other tabs. Yet the instructions sort of that we
20 started with indicate that the response shall address
21 each requirement of Sections 2 and 3, all inside of Tab

1 -- all in order in a separate tab.

2 So, as you're going through that tab in
3 order, should we reference to the other tabs where
4 those items have been submitted?

5 MS. TISDALE: I'm not sure I understand the
6 question. What do you mean, as far as --

7 MS. FIRNBERG: So, the instructions for Tab
8 E, the instructions for submitting under Tab E say to
9 address all requirements in Sections 2 and 3 in order.
10 Yet, within Section 3 there are instructions to put
11 some parts of that section in other tabs.

12 MS. TISDALE: Okay.

13 MS. FIRNBERG: So, it feels a little
14 confusing whether it needs to be in Tab E, per this
15 instruction, or in other tabs per the instructions
16 within Section 3.

17 MS. TISDALE: I think you're going to list in
18 Tab 3. Do we list any other tabs? Which section are
19 you referring to?

20 MS. FIRNBERG: So, we're looking for
21 clarification in how to address these items within Tab

1 E -- on page 41, Section F. Let me get there. So,
2 right in the middle, F1, the last sentence says "the
3 response shall address each requirement in Sections 2
4 and 3 in order." And this is all within Tab E.

5 MS. TISDALE: Yes.

6 MS. FIRNBERG: But then when you look at
7 Section 3, certain sections say -- for instance,
8 Section 3.10 says "put this in Tab F," and Section --

9 MS. TISDALE: What is it requesting to put in
10 Tab F?

11 MS. FIRNBERG: Let me go back to there.
12 Experience and personnel. I don't know. It's a
13 further instruction that says to put that in Tab F.
14 So, just we're seeing some --

15 MS. TISDALE: So, what you can do is in Tab E
16 when you are listing those in order and if there's
17 something that you have in Tab F, you can just say,
18 "listed in Tab F."

19 MS. FIRNBERG: See reference?

20 MS. TISDALE: Yes. Reference Tab F.

21 MS. FIRNBERG: Okay. Thank you. Thanks for

1 bearing with me on that one.

2 MS. TISDALE: No, that's okay. I just wanted
3 to make sure I'm trying to clear it up.

4 Any additional questions?

5 MS. PLAPINGER: I have a question. Jane
6 Plapinger, Maryland Coalition of Families. Two
7 questions -- one about resumes and one about
8 references.

9 It states in 5.3.2.G.2 that the resume of the
10 person identified as -- well, it indicates only one
11 position of program director is key personnel, and it
12 asks for resumes of key personnel.

13 So, my question is should -- would you like
14 us to include in the proposal resumes of other staff?

15 MS. TISDALE: It could be helpful, but --

16 MS. BURNS-HEFFNER: This is the minimum.
17 This is the absolute minimum required.

18 MS. TISDALE: This is what we're requesting.
19 If you want to submit other resumes, that is fine, yes.
20 It could boost your rating.

21 MS. PLAPINGER: Okay. And in the question

1 about references it requests three references -- at
2 least three references from customers who can document
3 the offeror's ability to provide the goods and services
4 specified in the RFP.

5 So, our way of thinking, that would be
6 individual families who have received family care
7 support. Could it also --

8 MS. TISDALE: We're looking for organizations
9 that you --

10 MS. BURNS-HEFFNER: No. We're looking for
11 your organizational customers.

12 MS. PLAPINGER: Okay. So those -- okay.

13 MS. BURNS-HEFFNER: Can you just tell me
14 which page and number you're talking about?

15 MS. PLAPINGER: It's Section 5.3.2.1 and that
16 is on page --

17 MS. TISDALE: We're looking for references
18 from organizations that you have provided similar
19 services for.

20 MS. PLAPINGER: Other funders?

21 MS. TISDALE: Like Maryland Department of

1 Health or another organization that you have provided
2 similar services.

3 MS. PLAPINGER: Got it.

4 MS. BURNS-HEFFNER: Which page --

5 MS. GRUSSO: 5.3.2.1, yeah. It's on page 44.

6 MS. BURNS-HEFFNER: No, this -- if you look
7 under -- look at number 1 it says name of client
8 organization. So that would not be individual
9 consumers that you provided services to.

10 MS. PLAPINGER: Yeah. The word "customers"
11 threw us. Okay. Thank you.

12 MS. BURNS-HEFFNER: As I read this, it says
13 three references. It doesn't say three individual
14 organizations, but it does say name of client
15 organization, and then list a point of contact.

16 MS. PLAPINGER: And then my last question is
17 on -- I'm sorry, I don't have the page number, but I
18 will find it in a minute. It's Section 5.3.2.F.7 --

19 MS. FIRNBERG: 42.

20 MS. PLAPINGER: Thank you. It's on the top
21 of 42, and it says "the offeror shall provide a backup

1 solution strategy recommendation as part of its
2 proposal." We're just wondering if you could define
3 what that is.

4 MS. TISDALE: We're going to get back to you
5 on that question. We'll just post a response on eMMA.

6 MS. PLAPINGER: Okay. Thank you.

7 MS. TISDALE: Any additional questions?

8 MS. FIRNBERG: I believe you said -- I'm
9 Lisa, Maryland Coalition of Families -- when you were
10 sharing earlier that questions were due ten days prior
11 to the proposal due date, and I think I saw that in
12 Section 4.3.1 -- sorry, I lost the page number -- that
13 it was due five days, that --

14 MS. TISDALE: We're going to do ten days.
15 We're going to just give -- so we can have enough time
16 for a response.

17 MS. FIRNBERG: Okay.

18 MS. TISDALE: Any additional information?

19 (No response.)

20 MS. TISDALE: Okay. Again, I just want to
21 stress about section-by-section, if you feel something

1 you can give more details about, we ask that you please
2 do. If there's something that you feel that's all
3 there, you can agree to it but it may be another
4 offeror who might give extra detail to boost their
5 rating. So, the more how, or more detail and
6 descriptive you can be, the better rating for your
7 proposals, okay?

8 If you think of any additional questions you
9 can submit questions to the email address and to the
10 site as stated earlier. Anything else? Anyone have
11 anything?

12 MS. FIRNBERG: And that's at
13 mdh.solicitationquestions@maryland.gov?

14 MS. TISDALE: Yes.

15 MS. BURNS-HEFFNER: And do not cc me on
16 those.

17 MS. TISDALE: No. Please do not contact
18 Laura or anyone from BHA. I will be the go-between. I
19 will make sure she gets any questions regarding the
20 scope.

21 MS. BURNS-HEFFNER: Process, purposes, yes.

1 MS. TISDALE: All right. Thank you. And I
2 want to thank you guys. Sorry I was late. Thank you
3 guys for taking the time to come, and good luck.

4 (Whereupon, at 11:15 a.m. the meeting
5 concluded.)

CERTIFICATE OF NOTARY

I, Carol O'Brocki, Notary Public, before whom the foregoing testimony was taken, do hereby certify that the witness was duly sworn by me; that said testimony is a true record of the testimony given by said witness; that I am neither counsel for, related to, nor employed by any of the parties to this action, nor financially or otherwise interested in the outcome of the action; and that the testimony was reduced to typewriting by me or under my direction.

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